His moſt Chriſtian Majeſty's

LETTER

TO THE

STATES GENERAL

OF THE

United Provinces.

WITH THE

MEMORIAL

Preſented by Count D'*Avaux* at the

HAGUE.

July 26th. 1701.

Moſt Dear Great Friends, and Confederates,

WE have thought fit to Re-call the Count D' *Avaux* our Extraordinary Ambaſſador to you, ſeeing how little beneficial proved the Conferences which you had deſired, and which you have ſo often interrupted. Our Intentions are no leſs inclined to Peace, as he will acquaint you with before his departure. It remains only for us to aſſure you, that it is ſtill in your Power to receive proofs of our ancient Friendſhip for your Republick, and of the deſire we had to make you experience the Effects thereof upon all Occaſions. We pray that GOD will keep you, moſt dear, &c. in his Holy Protection. Your good Friends, Allies, and Confederates. Signed *Lewis*, and underneath *Colbert*. *Verſailles*, the 18th of *July*, 1701.

The MEMORIAL. *is as Follows*

THE under written Count *d' Avaux*, Ambaſſador Extraordinary from the Moſt Chriſtian King, being arrived at the *Hague* in *February* laſt, had reaſon to hope, that the Orders given him by his Maſter, would ſufficiently manifeſt the deſire he always had to maintain the Peace, and that your Lordſhips would make their profit of his favourable Diſpoſitions, after having earneſtly deſired, that his Majeſty would give 'em leave to propoſe in Regulating Conferences, ſuch ſecurities as you might Reaſonably deſire, and agree at the ſame time about means for preventing a new War. This ſtep of your Lordſhips, and their true Intereſts, did equally perſwade, that the deſired Conference ſhould have an happy ſucceſs, and the moſt Chriſtian King declaring on his part, that he will omit nothing for preſerving the publick Tranquility, it ſeemed, that the firſt alarms of your Lordſhips would be happily Calmed and Removed, and that their Confidence in his Majeſty's affection, would diſſipate the vain apprehenſions which the Acceſſion of his Grand-ſon to the Throne of *Spain* had ſtruck them into. The Count *d' Avaux* did therefore hope, that after a ſhort Embaſſy, he ſhould ſoon return to his Maſter with the ſatisfaction of having been employed in preſerving the new Troubles [illegible] threatened with. Their his hopes were confirmed when your Lordſhips acknowledging the Right of the King of *Spain*, wrote to that Prince to congratulate his acceſſion to the Crown. They ſhewed by that Reſolution, worthy of their Prudence, that if they perſiſted in demanding ſecurities for themſelves, they at leaſt owned the injuſtice of ſome Foreign Precautions, and that they would avoid the dangerous troubles of interweaving the ſame with their own intereſts. The moſt Chriſtian King alſo forgetting the long ſilence of your Lordſhips on the acceſſion of the Catholick King, all things ſeemed to turn to the ſtrengthning of the Peace, when the Propoſals of your Lordſhips and thoſe of the Envoy of the King of *England* gave reaſon to believe, that War rather than Peace ſhould be the effect of the ſtrict Union, which appeared between that Prince and your Lordſhips, by the conformity of thoſe Propoſals. They have afterwards proteſted that their exceſſive Armies were the effect of a juſt apprehenſion produced by the power of the King, and that they were not to be looked upon as an effect of the truſt they had in their own ſtrength; But if thoſe fears, ſo lively expreſſed in their Letter to the King of *Great Britain*, during the Seſſion of the Parliament were real, and if your Lordſhips in Repreſenting the dangers they were threatned with on all ſides, had nothing elſe in view than to prevent the ſame, they had in their own hands the proper means to ſucceed therein. There was no need of bringing ſo great a number of Troops into the Field, to buy at that time *Foreign* Alliances, to drain their Provinces, and to make all the Extraordinary preparations of the greateſt Wars. Your Lordſhips themſelves had offered Conferences as a means to ſecure the Peace, and it was in their power to render that ſame uſeful. The King did never intend to prolong them by vain difficulties, and to improve thoſe delays for propoſing himſelf for War under a falſe appearance of Peace. His Majeſty being kindly united with his Grand-

Grand-Son, has not formed my incident for the admission of the *Spanish* Ambaſſador into the Conferences, and has made uſe of no preſence for Retarding the effect thereof. They were begun for treating therein of the intereſts of your Lordſhips alone. It was in your hands to bring them to a ſpeedy Concluſion, to find therein the ſecurity of your Provinces, the Advantages of your Commerce, and an eternal aſſurance in the *Friendſhip* of the moſt Chriſtian King. But inſtead of ſeriouſly endeavouring the ſame, your Lordſhips have put off the Concluſion, in inſiſting on the admiſſion of the Envoy of the King of *England*, into the Conferences with the Ambaſſador under written and your Deputies. They muſt not fancy that the true Motive of that demand has eſcaped the Penetration of his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty. It was eaſie to gueſs, that it was not for furthering the ſucceſs of the Negotiations, your Lordſhips deſired the intervention of a Power, which has no pretence to pretend to any Security for it ſelf. If his Majeſty has for ſome time oppoſed the ſame, and offered to your Lordſhips, that the Negotiations begun at the *Hague* for the Strengthening of the Peace, ſhould be continued at *Paris*, his Majeſty acted by the ſame principle which rules his whole Conduct; That is, By the ſincere deſire of removing all the Obſtackles which the Enemies of the Peace are perpetually raiſing. He foreſaw well enough what would be the ſucceſs of the Conferences at the *Hague*, and that the difficulty of the Admiſſion of the Envoy of *England* would be no ſooner removed, but that ſome other Incident more capable of perplexing the Negociation, would be induſtriouſly ſtarted up. The King indeed could hardly believe, that your Lordſhips would be eaſily induced to inſiſt on the pretended Satisfaction of the Emperor, to expoſe the Intereſts of that Prince, (naming them with thoſe of your Republick, to ſet up for *Arbiters* between the Houſes of *France* and *Auſtria*, so determine, that *Philip* the fourth had a Right and Power to change as he pleaſed the Conſtitution of his Kingdoms, and exclude for ever the true Heirs. That *Charles* the ſecond on the contrary had no Authority to recal thoſe Heirs, and re-eſtabliſh by his Will the Fundamental Laws of the Crown of *Spain*. And indeed it was hardly to be believed, that ſo wiſe a Republick, ſhould, in favour of the Houſe of *Auſtria* againſt *France*, reſolve to break thoſe Treaties, which have been Regarded as the Confirmation and Seal of their Sovereignty. That they would, to the coſt of their own Provinces, the Trade of their Subjects, and their Riches, engage themſelves to ſupport a Foreign Intereſt, few months after they have made a quite contrary ſtep in acknowledging the King of *Spain*. But it appears, that theſe Conſiderations which formerly would have been weighty in your Republick, have yielded to new Maxims.

The Ambaſſador underwritten thinks, that he ſhould abuſe the Truſt the King his Maſter is pleaſed to honour him with, if he ſhould write any longer, that there is yet ſome Succeſs to be expected from the Conferences. His Majeſty is too penetrating to believe any ſuch thing after the Declaration of the Envoy of the King of *England* has made as he ſays, on the part of the King his Maſter to the ſaid Ambaſſador. Your Lordſhips know how that Envoy has Declared unto him that the King of *Great Britain* will never depart from the Intereſts of the Emperor, nor enter into any Preliminals of Accommodation, unleſs Satisfaction is given to that Prince. The Union of your Lordſhips with the King of *England* is too ſtrict, your Lordſhips have too much manifeſted, that they would blindly follow the Sentiments of

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that Prince, and take such Measures as he himself should think most convenient, to leave any room to doubt: But your Lordships have already resolved to make alike Declaration to the Ambassador of the most Christian King. They have already done it, they have declared that their Deputies could not continue their Conferences without the Intervention of the *Envoy* of *England*. He excludes himself from them, and they are immediately suspended. From whence it appears that it would be to no purpose, that the Ambassador of the most Christian King should any longer continue at the *Hague*, whether he was sent for no other end but for these Conferences. If he has not the Satisfaction of having fulfilled the Intentions of his Majesty, in leaving Peace established for a long time between him and the United Provinces, he has at least that pleasure of having convinced the World, that if the publick Tranquility is interrupted, the blame thereof shall not lie at his door. That his Majesty has arm'd himself only for the defence of the King his Grand-son. That if he had designed any Conquests, it was easie for him; His Troops being on the Frontiers of your Republick, he might have easily profited of the weak State you were in at that time. Your Lordships will not fear that this should be told, seeing they themselves have every where published the same, and this Truth own'd by themselves, ought to make them sensible that it has always been in their power, to find in the Friendship of his Majesty all the Security which they thought to have lost by the Accession of his Grand-son to the Crown of *Spain*. If these Considerations, which it is as yet time to make, are not able to prevent a War, the most Christian King has cause to hope, that GOD rewarding the Cares of the Majesty for the preservation of the Repose of Christendom, will continue to pour on the Justice of his Cause the same Blessings which the Divine Providence has heaped on him during the course of his Glorious Reign; That such as dare to attack him, will know by the event, that it is neither his weakness, nor distrust of his Strength, which have hitherto withheld his Arms. That they will see that he might have avenged the affronts put upon his Flag, and prevent his Subjects from being seized and dealt with as Enemies, by the *Dutch* and *English* Ships. That he might hinder the laids Ships to come and sound his Harbours, and fire upon the *French* Ships. Lastly, That it was in his power to seize places that were then defenceless, and obtain most considerable Advantages for maintaining a War which he foresaw from the conduct of the Neighbouring Power. That if his Majesty has dissembled those affronts, and neglected the use he could make of the own'd Superiority of his Forces; He has done it, for no other design, than for taking from his Enemies the least Occasion of saying that he has in the least acted contrary to the exact Observation of the Treaties of *Reswick*.

The underwritten Ambassador Wishes, that your Lordships being convinced by Conduct of his Majesty, of the sincerity of his Intentions, would take, which is yet time Resolutions suitable to their Advantages. And tho' his Departure hinders him from the Glory of being instrumental therein, he will always concern himself in the Happiness of your Republick, having had for so many Years the Honour of attending the King's Orders near your Lordships. D' *Avaux*.

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